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Voluntary Product Standard

PS 70-76

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE/National Bureau of Standards

MARKING OF ARTICLES MADE OF KARAT GOLD

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ANSI/VPS PS 70-76

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[1] Headquarters and Laboratories at Gaithersburg, Maryland, unless otherwise noted; mailing address Washington, D.C. 20234.

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, Juanita M. Kreps, Secretary

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Voluntary Product Standard PS 70-76

Marking of Articles Made of Karat Gold

Approved by the American National Standards Institute on April 18, 1977, as American National Standard ANSI/VPS PS 70-76

Abstract

This Voluntary Product Standard covers the marking of articles made of karat gold, as herein defined, offered for sale in the United States of America. Requirements are given for the marking of "Karat," "Karat Gold," "Kt," "Kt Gold," "K," or "K Gold," preceded by a whole number. Definitions of trade terms used and methods for identifying products that comply with this standard are included.

Key words: Jewelry, marking of; "Karat," "Karat Gold," "Kt," "Kt Gold," "K," or "K Gold," marking of.

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VOLUNTARY PRODUCT STANDARDS

Voluntary Product Standards are developed under procedures published by the Department of Commerce in Part 10, Title 15, of the Code of Federal Regulations. The purpose of the standards is to establish nationally recognized requirements for products, and to provide all concerned interests with a basis for common understanding of the characteristics of the products. The National Bureau of Standards administers the *Voluntary Product Standards* program as a supplement to the activities of the private sector standardizing organizations.

Establishment of a VOLUNTARY PRODUCT STANDARD

The role of the National Bureau of Standards in the establishment of a Voluntary Product Standard is to (1) act as an unbiased coordinator in the development of the standard, (2) provide editorial assistance in the preparation of the standard, (3) supply such assistance and review as is required to assure the technical soundness of the standard, (4) seek satisfactory adjustment of valid points of disagreement, (5) determine the compliance with the criteria of the Department's procedures, (6) provide secretarial functions for each committee appointed under the Department's procedures, and (7) publish the standard as a public document.

Producers, distributors, users, consumers, and other interested groups contribute to the establishment of a *Voluntary Product Standard* by (1) initiating and participating in the development of the standard, (2) providing technical or other related counsel as appropriate relating to the standard, (3) promoting the use of and support for the standard, and (4) assisting in keeping the standard current with respect to advancing technology and marketing practices.

Use of a VOLUNTARY PRODUCT STANDARD

The use of a *Voluntary Product Standard* is voluntary; the National Bureau of Standards has no regulatory power in the enforcement of the provisions of the standards. However, since the standards represent a consensus of all interested groups, their provisions are likely to become established as trade customs. In addition, when a standard is made a part of a legal document, such as a sales contract or code, compliance with the standard is enforceable.

The benefits derived from *Voluntary Product Standards* are in direct proportion to their general recognition and actual use. Producers and distributors whose products meet the requirements of a *Voluntary Product Standard* may refer to the standard in advertising and on labels to promote greater public understanding of or confidence in their products. Purchasers may order products conforming to the requirements of the standards.

For copies of the *Voluntary Product Standards* procedures or for more information concerning the development and use of these standards you may write to: Standards Development Services Section, National Bureau of Standards, Washington, D.C. 20234.

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Voluntary Product Standard PS 70-76
Supersedes Commercial Standard CS 67-38

Marking of Articles Made of Karat Gold

Effective April 12, 1976 (See section 5.)

(This Standard, which was initiated by the Jewelers Vigilance Committee, has been developed under the *Procedures for the Development of Voluntary Product Standards* of the U.S. Department of Commerce as a revalidation of CS 67–38, *Marking Articles Made of Karat Gold.* See Section 6, *History of Project*, for further information.)

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Standard is to establish nationally recognized marking requirements for articles made of karat gold and to provide producers, distributors, and users with a basis for common understanding of the characteristics of this product.

2. SCOPE

This Voluntary Product Standard covers the marking of articles made of karat gold, as herein defined, offered for sale in the United States of America. Definitions of trade terms used and methods for identifying products that comply with this standard are included.

3. REQUIREMENTS

3.1. General—Products represented as complying with this Voluntary Product Standard shall meet all the requirements specified herein.

3.2. Application of quality marks—Articles made of gold, as herein defined, shall have applied thereto a quality mark, to wit, "Karat," "Karat Gold," "Kt," "Kt Gold," "K," or "K Gold," preceded by a whole number, which shall indicate the number of 1/24 parts of fine gold contained in the alloy comprising the article. No other mark shall be applied to such articles indicating or purporting to indicate that any article contains gold or the quality, fineness, quantity, weight, or kind of gold in an article, provided that:

(1) Nothing contained herein shall preclude a manufacturer, who so desires, from stating on tags, cards, or other accompanying literature the exact gold content in terms of fine gold. For example, the tag attached to an article marked "14 Kt" may bear the statement in amplification of the mark: "This article is guaranteed to assay not less than 584/1000 of fine gold," or in the case of an article marked "12 Kt"—"This article is guaranteed to assay not less than 500/1000 of fine gold," if such is the fact, and provided further that:

(2) Nothing herein is intended to restrict the use of quality marks indicating that the article is composed in part of other precious metals, as for example, "18 Kt & Plat.," "14 Kt & Pall.," "Sterling+10K," etc.

(3) No gold article of less than 10 karat fineness shall have applied to it any quality mark.

(4) No gold article, made with a hollow center and then filled with base metal, cement, pitch, or other foreign substance, thereby giving the article added weight or strength, shall be marked with a quality mark.

3.3. Tolerance—The tolerances for fineness shall be those provided by the National Gold and Silver Stamping Act of 1906[1] or any amendment thereof except that no minus tolerance is permitted if the quality mark is amplified by a fraction expressing minimum fineness in thousandths, as described in 3.2 (1).

3.4. Trademark—Any article herein defined having applied thereto a quality mark, shall also have applied thereto and immediately adjacent to such quality mark, and equally visible, legible, clear, and distinct therewith, the name or a trademark duly applied for or registered under the laws of the United States, of the manufacturer or seller of such articles or the trade name of the manufacturer or seller. Initials shall not be used in lieu of a name unless registered as a trademark, as above provided.

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[1] This act provides that the actual fineness of the alloy "shall not be less by more than one-half of one karat, than the fineness indicated by the mark," (except in the case of watchcases and flatware, where the actual fineness "shall not be less by more than 3/1000ths parts than the fineness indicated by the mark"), and that in making any test for such fineness, that part of the article taken for assay shall be such a part or portion as contains no solder. The act also provides for an additional test where solder is used—that the actual fineness of the entire quantity of gold or of its alloys "including all solder and alloy of inferior fineness used for brazing or uniting the parts of such article (all such gold, alloys, and solder being assayed as one piece) shall not be less by more than 1 karat than the fineness indicated by the mark." In other words, there is one test provided for articles which do not contain solder, and two tests, both of which must be met, for articles that do contain solder. (For full text see 34 Stat. 260, as amended by 75 Stat. 775, and as amended by 84 Stat. 690, 15 U.S.C. 294, *et seq.*)

3.5. Class, pattern, type, or style mark—If an article herein defined has applied to it the name or a trademark duly applied for or registered under the laws of the United States, of the manufacturer or seller of such article, and a quality mark conforming to the requirements of this standard, it may also have applied to it numerals or other indicia to identify the class, pattern, type, or style of the article, provided such numerals are not incorporated with the quality mark and are not placed or arranged so as to mislead or deceive.

3.6. Exemptions—Exemptions recognized in the jewelry trade and not to be considered in any assay for quality include springs, posts, and separable backs of lapel buttons, posts, and nuts for attaching interchangeable ornaments, and wire pegs or rivets used for applying mountings and other ornaments, which mountings or ornaments shall be of the quality marked.

3.6.1. Optical exemptions—Exemptions recognized in the optical trade and not to be considered in any assay for quality shall include screws, dowels, springs for spring shoe straps, and for oxfords, coil, or joint springs.

4. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Standard, the following definitions shall apply:

Apply or Applied—Apply or applied includes any method or means of application or attachment to, or of use on, or in conjunction with, or in relation to an article, whether such application, attachment, or use is to, on, by, in, or with (1) the article itself, (2) anything attached to the article, (3) anything to which the article is attached, (4) anything in, or on, which the article is, or (5) any bill, invoice, order, statement, letter, advertisement, or anything so used or placed as to lead to a reasonable belief that it refers to the article in question.

Gold—Gold includes any alloy of the element gold of not less than 10 karat fineness. "Karat Gold" means an alloy of the element gold of not less than 10 karat fineness.

Fine Gold—Fine gold means gold of 24 karat quality.

Mark—Mark means any letter, figure, numeral, symbol, sign, or device, or any combinations thereof.

Quality mark—Quality mark means any mark indicating an article is composed of gold, and/or indicating the quality, fineness, quantity, weight, or kind of gold in an article.

Karat—A karat is 1/24 part by weight of the metallic element gold in an article. For example, "10 Kt" or "10 Karat Gold" means that the metallic element gold contained in the article constitutes 10/24 by weight of the entire article.

Articles of merchandise—The expression "article of merchandise" as used in this Standard shall signify any goods, wares, works of art, commodity, or other things which may be lawfully kept or offered for sale.

Oxfords—Oxfords are a form of eyeglasses where a flat spring joins the two eye rims and its tension exerted on the nose serves to hold the unit in place. Oxfords are also referred to as pince nez.

5. EFFECTIVE DATE AND IDENTIFICATION

The effective date of this Standard is April 12, 1976. As of the effective date, reference to PS 70–76, may be made in contracts, codes, advertising, invoices, product labels, and the like, but no product may be advertised or represented in any manner which would imply or tend to imply approval or endorsement of that product by the National Bureau of Standards, the Department of Commerce, or by the Federal Government.

The following statements are suggested for use in representing products as conforming to all requirements of this Standard:

(1) "This article conforms to all requirements established in Voluntary Product Standard PS 70–76, developed and published in accordance with the U.S. Department of Commerce *Procedures for the Development of Voluntary Product Standards*. Full responsibility for the conformance of this product to the standard is assumed by (name and address of producer or distributor)."

(2) "Conforms to PS 70–76, (name and address of producer or distributor)."

6. HISTORY OF PROJECT

In 1937 Commercial Standard CS 67–38, *Marking Articles Made of Karat Gold*, was developed at the request of the New England Manufacturing Jewelers' and Silversmiths' Association (renamed Manufacturing Jewelers and Silversmiths of America, Inc.), supported by the Jewelers Vigilance Committee, Inc., and was published in 1938.

In December 1974 the Jewelers Vigilance Committee, Inc., the recognized trade association for

the jewelry industry, requested that the National Bureau of Standards initiate a revalidation of CS 67–38 under the *Procedures for the Development of Voluntary Product Standards*. Appointments were made to the Standing Committee, and the Jewelers Vigilance Committee, Inc., recommendation was forwarded to them in July 1975 for review. The Standing Committee indicated the standard should be revalidated and in December 1975 they were asked to vote on the appropriateness of the proposal. In February 1976 all members of the Standing Committee approved the proposal to revalidate CS 67–38.

The new edition of the standard was designated Voluntary Product Standard PS 70–76, *Marking of Articles Made of Karat Gold*, and became effective on April 12, 1976.

Technical Standards Coordinator:

C. W. Devereux
Standards Development Services Section
National Bureau of Standards
Washington, D.C. 20234

7. STANDING COMMITTEE

A Standing Committee has been appointed to assist in keeping this Voluntary Product Standard up to date. The names of the members of the committee are available from the Standards Development Services Section, Washington, D.C. 20234, which serves as the secretariat of the committee.

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To begin publication as a single journal, July-August, 1977

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NOTE: At present the principal publication outlet for these data is the Journal of Physical and Chemical Reference Data (JPCRD) published quarterly for NBS by the American Chemical Society (ACS) and the American Institute of Physics (AIP). Subscriptions, reprints, and supplements available from ACS, 1155 Sixteenth St. N.W., Wash. D. C. 20056.

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Voluntary Product Standards—Developed under procedures published by the Department of Commerce in Part 10, Title 15, of the Code of Federal Regulations. The purpose of the standards is to establish nationally recognized requirements for products, and to provide all concerned interests with a basis for common understanding of the characteristics of the products. NBS administers this program as a supplement to the activities of the private sector standardizing organizations.

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